

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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P 231220Z APR 77
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5727
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY
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USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION NATO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NICOSIA 1096

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINR, CY, US
SUBJECT: CYPRUS NEGOTIATION: COVERSATION WITH TURKISH AMBASSADOR

REF: (A) USUN 1197, (B) STATE 091864 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: TURKISH AMBASSADOR ONHON, WHILE CONTINUING TO BE CONSTRUCTIVE AND HELPFUL IN HIS APPROACH TO THE CYPRUS NEGOTIATION, IS BLEAK ABOUT THE PROSPECTS OF DOING MORE THAN MARKING TIME BETWEEN NOW AND MID-AUGUST. HE STATES CANDIDLY THAT ANKARA DOES NOT WANT TO HEAR ABOUT CYPRUS UNTIL ELECTIONS ARE OVER AND A NEW GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN FORMED. DENKTASH CONTINUES TO BE NEGATIVE. HE AND OTHER TURKISH CYPRIOTS OPPOSED TO COMPROMISE ARE FISHING IN TURKEY'S TROUBLED WATERS AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO DO SO MORE AS TURKEY'S POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS INTENSIFY. END SUMMARY.

1. I HAD A LONG DISCUSSION WITH TURKISH AMBASSADOR ONHON LATE APRIL 21. DE CUELLAR HAS BEEN WORKING CLOSELY WITH HIM IN
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APPROACHING THE MAY NEGOTIATION AND WE BOTH FEEL HE IS A POSITIVE, IF FRUSTRATED, CONTRIBUTOR.

2. OUR CONVERSATION STARTED, SO TO SPEAK, AT THE END WITH A REVIEW OF TURKISH ELECTION PROSPECTS AND POST-ELECTION PROCEDURES. ONHON (WHO AS CABINET DIRECTOR TO PRESIDENT KORUTURK FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS HAS A GOOD FIX ON HIS

COUNTRY'S DOMESTIC POLITICS) SAID THE EARLIEST DATE BY WHICH A NEW TURKISH GOVERNMENT COULD GET ITSELF AND TURKISH CYPRIOTS PREPARED FOR FURTHER SERIOUS NEGOTIATION WOULD BE MID-AUGUST. THERE COULD BE NO FLEXIBILITY ON THE TERRITORIAL ASPECT BEFORE THEN. AT PRESENT, THE LOUD AND CLEAR SIGNAL FROM ANKARA IS THAT DEMIREL AND CAGLAYANGIL DO NOT WANT TO HEAR ABOUT CYPRUS. DENKTASH CONTINUES HIS STRONG OPPOSITION TO THE WHOLE IDEA OF NEGOTIATION AND COMPROMISE. AS AN ADDITIONAL COMPLICATION, DENKTASH HAS GOTTEN HIMSELF TANGLED UP IN A FORM OF ADMINISTRATION UNSUITABLE FOR THE TURKISH CYPRIOT SITUATION. IN HIS DESIRE AFTER 1974 TO PUT HIMSELF ON A LEVEL WITH MAKARIOS, HE MISTAKENLY CREATED A CABINET SYSTEM OF ADMINISTRATION, COMPLETE WITH PRIME MINISTER, AND THIS IS NOW GIVING HIM TROUBLE. A PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM WOULD HAVE BEEN MORE APPROPRIATE TO THE TURKISH CYPRIOT REALITIES. ANOTHER NEGATIVE FACTOR IS THAT (TURKISH CYPRIOT NEGOTIATOR) ONAN, NEVER A STRONG OR ENERGETIC PERSONALITY FINDS THE NEGOTIATION TIRING AND WISHES WISTFULLY THAT HE COULD GET OUT.

3. ONHON REMARKED THAT ONE CONSEQUENCE OF THE TURKISH CYPRIOT CURRENT INTERNAL FUEDING IS THAT THE FACTIONS ARE TRYING TO EXPLOIT MAINLAND POLITICAL DIFFERENCES, AND WITH SOME SUCCESS. THIS UNFORTUNATE PHENOMENON CAN BE EXPECTED TO INTENSIFY AS THE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS IN TURKEY MOVE FORWARD. IN THE PERIOD AHEAD, AS A RESULT, THE GOT (AND CONSEQUENTLY ONHON HIMSELF) WILL HAVE LESS AUTHORITY OVER DENKTASH EVEN IF IT WERE CONCERNED TO TRY TO EXERCISE AUTHORITY, WHICH IT IS NOT IN VIEW OF ITS OTHER PRIORITIES.

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4. WITH THIS SAID, ONHON AGREED THAT THERE IS A COMMON TURKISH, AMERICAN AND UN INTEREST IN WORKING TO SUSTAIN THE FRAGILE STRUCTURE OF THE NEGOTIATION THAT WILL RESUME IN THE THIRD WEEK OF MAY.

5. (NOT HAVING RECEIVED AT THE TIME OF OUR CONVERSATION DEPT'S PROPOSALS IN REFTELS), I BROACHED TWO NOT VERY DISSIMILAR THOUGHTS OF MY OWN. I NOTED THAT IN VIENNA DISCUSSION OF TERRITORY ONAN HAD COMMENTED FREELY ABOUT ALL THE THINGS THE TURKISH SIDE COULD NOT DO. THERE HAD BEEN NO TALK OF WHAT IT MIGHT BE ABLE TO DO, EVEN IN A NONCOMMITTAL, PACKAGE-DEAL SENSE. IN MAY, I HOPED IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR ONAN TO GO BEYOND THE PLANNED AND ALMOST INEVITABLY STERILE DISCUSSION OF LAND OWNERSHIP, PRODUCTIVITY, RESOURCES, ETC., AND GET INTO THIS KIND OF MORE FRUITFUL EXCHANGE. ONHON SHOOK HIS HEAD SKEPTICALLY AND MY IMPRESSION WAS THAT HE DID NOT THINK THE CURRENT ATTITUDE IN ANKARA WOULD SUPPORT THIS.

6. ON THE CONSTITUTIONAL ASPECT, I SAID WE HAD HEARD THAT, BEFORE VIENNA, THE TURKISH SIDE HAD CONSIDERED GETTING INTO DISCUSSION OF THE POSSIBILITY OF TWO OR THREE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES IN A WAY THAT WOULD MOVE THEIR POSITION A SHADE CLOSER TO THE GREEK, BUT THAT THIS HAD APPARENTLY BEEN VETOED BY DENKTASH. I WONDERED IF RENEWAL EFFORT BY THE GOT COULD NOT PERSUADE THE TURKISH CYPRIOTS TO RECONSIDER THIS IN THE MAY DISCUSSION, PERHAPS NOT AS AN OPENER BUT IN A GIVE-AND-TAKE. ONHON ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THIS HAD EARLIER BEEN URGED BY ANKARA, BUT HE THOUGHT DENKTASH WOULD BE HARD TO MOVE. AGAIN HE ALLUDED TO HIS INITIAL COMMENT THAT IT WAS REALISTICALLY TIME OUT ON CYPRUS AS FAR AS THE LEADERSHIP IN ANKARA WAS CONCERNED.

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7. DESPITE THIS UNPROMISING BACKGROUND, ONHON ASSURED ME THAT WE COULD COUNT ON HIS SUPPORT AND THAT OF GOT IN HAVING ONHON BE SUFFICIENTLY FORTHCOMING ON CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO TERRITORY AND ON CONSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS TO KEEP THE NEGOTIATIONS IN MAY AND IN LATE JUNE/JULY, FOLLOWING DE CUELLAR'S RETURN FROM NEW YORK, TICKING OVER AT THE RATE OF PERHAPS ONE, ONE WEEK AND TWO THE NEXT ON AN ALTERNATING BASIS. I SAID THIS WAS HARDLY CONSISTENT WITH THE GOT'S COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINED AND MEANINGFUL NEGOTIATION AND WOULD NOT BE SEEN AS SUCH BY MY GOVERNMENT. I MENTIONED THAT I HAD SAID THE SAME THING TO THE OTHER SIDE.

8. AT THE END OF OUR CONVERSATION WE TALKED ABOUT MAKARIOS' HEALTH. ONHON SAID THE ARCHBISHOP'S DISABILITY WAS UNFORTUNATE SINCE HE AGREED THAT--AT LONG LAST-- THE ARCHBISHOP SEEMED GENUINELY COMMITTED TO NEGOTIATION.

9. COMMENT: PURSUANT REFTELS, I WILL BE GOING BACK TO DE CUELLAR AND THE PARTIES OVER THE COMING WEEK.
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